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The airlines are the only ones that have the passenger lists. We have a requirement that every airline that flies into the United States must provide us with a passenger list.

If we want to avoid the mistakes of September 11, we need to at least allow the airlines to have some information about who the suspected terrorists are. The Senate bill puts together a committee, but has no requirement. It does not require that every airline coming into the United States provide us with a list.

So the very least we can do is learn by the mistakes of September 11, see that they are not repeated. The very least we can do is not make the same mistakes we made in 1996, when we passed knee-jerk legislation, and we bought billions of dollars' worth of equipment, made all kinds of changes, and addressed explosive devices. We acquired explosive devices, and we have unused explosive devices because we do not have rules to get in place the proper explosive devices.

The worst thing we can do is repeat the mistakes of 1996, so we do not want to do that.

Then again in 2000, when we saw we still did not have in place rules for baggage handlers, we passed another law directing the agency to do it. As of tonight, they still have not done this. So while the Senate bill, I think, was well-intended, they tried to pass something in a hurry and get it to us, but it was done in haste.

We need to proceed with caution. We need to proceed in an expeditious fashion, but also take the very best from others who have put into place the tightest possible security systems, to put people in place who have both the responsibility and, most importantly, the authority.

If there is no other reason to defeat the Senate proposal, it is because it lacks the ability to put rules in place relating to security on an expedited basis, and this brings us back to September 10, not learning one single thing, using airline screening employees as the scapegoats. Airline screening employees on September 11 did not fail; it was the lack of Federal standards put in place to check even their background. It was the lack of Federal agencies to do their jobs.

If we want to put more personnel someplace, we should put them in our visa department. I checked to see how many people work issuing visas around the entire world, and it is somewhere in the neighborhood of 5,000. Here we are creating a bureaucracy of 28,000 baggage screeners and what we may need are people who can identify a potential terrorist, a hijacker, a potential murderer who may be let legally into the United States.

Most of the terrorists used our border as a swinging door with a visa, with a permit. We can do all the checks, we can send the National Guard to do a check at the screening area, we can

have a Federal employee or a contract employee, we can have the airline employees all become Federal employees and they can check the IDs. But if Mr. Adda comes to the counter, and they check him, and he has an ID and a visa, they let him go; and he goes next to the airport screener or to a National Guard person, whoever is checking the IDs there now, and that person checks it and say, oh, this is Mr. Adda, go forth Mr. Adda, you have a visa. A Federal Government employee has given him that visa; therefore he goes to the next stage and he gets on the airplane. Congratulations, Mr. Adda; welcome, get on the plane.

So if we are going to put Federal employees someplace where we need them, we need to put them at the visa locations. There are less than 500 INS inspectors and inspectors along our Canadian border, and that is where we understand the terrorists came in. We have 6,000 or 7,000 down in Mexico, but these terrorists picked our weakest point. If we are going to put employees there at the airports, 28,000, why not put a few in place to protect our borders to catch these people as they come in?

So we need the intelligence, first of all, about these individuals. We need someone checking the visas. All the protections in the world can be put in place, but they will be useless if we do not do this.

Again, look at the September 11 events. Plastic weapons were not in place because we did not have the most modern equipment in place. We cannot make the mistakes we have made in the past.

Tomorrow my colleagues will have an opportunity to debate this and, hopefully, we will do the right thing to ensure a comprehensive transportation and aviation security plan for the country. We must do it right. We must do it in a comprehensive fashion. I plead with my colleagues not to make this a partisan issue, but to make it a public interest issue and pass the very best legislation. The American people deserve no less.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Members are reminded to refrain from characterizing Senate action.

ABUSES SUFFERED BY AFGHAN WOMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, once again we have come to denounce the ongoing abuse of Afghan women, and we will not stop coming here each week to highlight the atrocities of this attack on the very funda-

mental human rights of women and children, especially their girls. I want to ensure that the plight of Afghan women and girls is not forgotten, and in order to do so, we must continue to bring attention to their status.

The women of this House have constantly taken a stand for Afghan women, and some of the very sensitive men as well. Tonight I am joined by one of my colleagues who has been extremely sensitive and passionate about the Afghan women and their plight and the atrocities that they have had to withstand. But it is the resolve of the entire Congress that will help return civil society to Afghan women and children.

Women and children in Afghanistan have been the primary victims of the Taliban regime. Before the Taliban took control, women were leaders in public life and politics. For example, in Kabul, over 70 percent of teachers were women. Forty percent of the doctors and the vast majority of the health care workers were women. In addition, over half of the university students were women. In fact, in 1977, women made up over 15 percent of Afghanistan's highest legislative branch. Now, that is more than the 14 percent of women that serve here in the U.S. Congress today.

When the Taliban came to power, they banned women from working, prohibited women and girls from attending school, and forbade women from leaving their homes without being accompanied by a close male relative. Women have been brutally beaten, publicly flogged and killed for violating the Taliban decrees, decrees no doubt that the Taliban imposed and no one else.

Let me cite some of the horrific examples of the heinous acts of the Taliban. A woman who defied Taliban orders by running a home school for girls was killed in front of her family and friends. A woman caught trying to flee Afghanistan with a man not related to her was stoned to death for adultery. An elderly woman was brutally beaten with a metal cable until her leg was broken because her ankle was accidentally shown from underneath her burqa. Women have died of curable ailments because male doctors are not allowed to treat them. The two women who were accused of prostitution were publicly hung.

Mr. Speaker, these acts are unconscionable and inhumane and members of the Women's Caucus here in the House, of which I serve as co-chair, have taken on this project, along with my dear friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE). Together, we are working to make sure that the women throughout this Nation and around this world help to empower Afghan women. We will continue to take action until we end this horrendous gender apartheid.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I am joined by this friend of mine who has been diligent in working to bring attention, to